



Prominent Jewish Religious and Political Groups

A Teaching Outline

Compiled By Dr. Harold Boltiger

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References Description Agreement with Jesus Disagreement with Jesus

PHARISEES

Strict group of religious Jews who advocated obedience to the most minute portions of the Jewish law and traditions. Very influential in the synagogues.

Jesus eats with the Pharisees.

Luke 7:36-47

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to come to his home for a meal, so Jesus accepted the invitation and sat down to eat. [37] A certain immoral woman heard he was there and brought a beautiful jar filled with expensive perfume. [38] Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them.

[39] When the Pharisee who was the host saw what was happening and who the woman was, he said to himself, "This proves that Jesus is no prophet. If God had really sent him, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a sinner!"

[40] Then Jesus spoke up and answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you."

"All right, Teacher," Simon replied, "go ahead."

[41] Then Jesus told him this story: "A man loaned money to two people—five hundred pieces of silver to one and fifty pieces to the other. [42] But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, canceling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?"

[43] Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt."

"That's right," Jesus said. [44] Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. [45] You didn't give me a kiss of greeting, but she has kissed my feet again and again from the time I first came in. [46] You neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head, but she has anointed my feet with rare perfume. [47] I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love."

The Kingdom of heaven is for those who obey God.

Matthew 5:20

"But I warn you—unless you obey God better than the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees do, you can't enter the Kingdom of Heaven at all!

Don't follow the example of the Pharisees.

Matthew 23:1-36

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, [2] "The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the Scriptures. [3] So practice and obey whatever they say to you, but don't follow their example. For they don't practice what they teach.

[4] They crush you with impossible religious demands and never lift a finger to help ease the burden.

[5] "Everything they do is for show. On their arms they wear extra wide prayer boxes with Scripture verses inside, and they wear extra-long tassels on their robes. [6] And how they love to sit at the head table at banquets and in the most prominent seats in the synagogue!

[7] They enjoy the attention they get on the streets, and they enjoy being called 'Rabbi.' [8] Don't ever let anyone call you 'Rabbi,' for you have only one teacher, and all of you are on the same level as brothers and sisters. [9] And don't address anyone here on earth as 'Father,' for only God in heaven is your spiritual Father.

[10] And don't let anyone call you 'Master,' for there is only one master, the Messiah. [11] The greatest among you must be a servant. [12] But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

[13] "How terrible it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you won't let others enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and you won't go in yourselves. Yes, how terrible it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. For you cross land and sea to make one convert, and then you turn him into twice the son of hell as you yourselves are.

[16] "Blind guides! How terrible it will be for you! For you say that it means nothing to swear 'by God's Temple'—you can break that oath. But then you say that it is binding to swear 'by the gold in the Temple.'

[17] Blind fools! Which is greater, the gold, or the Temple that makes the gold sacred? [18] And you say that to take an oath 'by the altar' can be broken, but to swear 'by the gifts on the altar' is binding! [19] How blind! For which is greater, the gift on the altar, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? [20] When you swear 'by the altar,' you are swearing by it and by everything on it. [21] And when you swear 'by the Temple,' you are swearing by it and by God, who lives in it.

[22] And when you swear 'by heaven,' you are swearing by the throne of God and by God, who sits on the throne.

[23] "How terrible it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest part of your income, but you ignore the important things of the law—justice, mercy, and faith. You should tithe, yes, but you should not leave undone the more important things. [24] Blind guides! You strain your water so you won't accidentally swallow a gnat; then you swallow a camel!

[25] "How terrible it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! You are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed and self-indulgence! [26] Blind Pharisees! First wash the inside of the cup, and then the outside will become clean, too.

[27] "How terrible it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs—beautiful on the outside but filled on the inside with dead people's bones and all sorts of impurity. [28] You try to look like upright people outwardly, but inside your hearts are filled with hypocrisy and lawlessness.

[29] "How terrible it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you build tombs for the prophets your ancestors killed and decorate the graves of the godly people your ancestors destroyed. [30] Then you say, 'We never would have joined them in killing the prophets.'

[31] "In saying that, you are accusing yourselves of being the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. [32] Go ahead. Finish what they started. [33] Snakes! Sons of vipers! How will you escape the judgment of hell? [34] I will send you prophets and wise men and teachers of religious law. You will kill some by crucifixion and whip others in your synagogues, chasing them from city to city.

[35] As a result, you will become guilty of murdering all the godly people from righteous Abel to Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered in the Temple between the altar and the sanctuary. [36] I assure you, all the accumulated judgment of the centuries will break upon the heads of this very generation.

The Pharisees declare their own judgment.

Luke 6:2

But some Pharisees said, "You shouldn't be doing that! It's against the law to work by harvesting grain on the Sabbath."

SADDUCEES

Wealthy, upper class, Jewish priestly party.

Rejected the authority of the Bible beyond the five books of Moses.

Profited from business in the Temple.

They, along with the Pharisees, were one of the two major parties of the Jewish high council.

Showed great respect for the five books of Moses, as well as the sanctity

The Pharisees and Sadducees rebuked.

Matthew 3:7

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to be baptized, he denounced them. "You brood of snakes!" he exclaimed. "Who warned you to flee God's coming judgment?"

'Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

Matthew 16:11-12

How could you even think I was talking about food? So again I say, 'Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.' "

[12] Then at last they understood that he wasn't speaking about yeast or bread but about the false teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Jews who said there is no resurrection after death.

Mark 12:18

Then the Sadducees stepped forward—a group of Jews who say there is no resurrection after death. They posed this question:

TEACHERS OF RELIGIOUS LAW

Professional interpreters of the law—who especially emphasized the traditions. Many teachers of religious law were Pharisees. Respect for the law. Committed to obeying God. Denied Jesus' authority to reinterpret the law. Rejected Jesus as Messiah because he did not obey all of their traditions

The teachers of religious law spoke with no authority.

Matthew 7:29

For he taught as one who had real authority—quite unlike the teachers of religious law.

The Pharisees also taught religious law.

Mark 2:6

But some of the teachers of religious law who were sitting there said to themselves,

The Teachers of Religious law condemn Jesus.

Mark 2:16

But when some of the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees saw him eating with people like that, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with such scum?"

ZEALOTS

A fiercely dedicated group of Jewish patriots determined to end Roman rule in Israel.

Concerned about the future of Israel.

Believed in the Messiah but did not recognize Jesus as the one sent by God.

Believed that the Messiah must be a political leader who would deliver Israel from Roman occupation.

The Zealots believed that Jesus must be a political leader.

Luke 6:15

Matthew, Thomas, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the Zealot),

They continued in prayer.

Acts 1:14

They all met together continually for prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

ESSENES

Jewish monastic group practicing ritual purity and personal holiness.

Emphasized justice, honesty, commitment.

Believed ceremonial rituals made them righteous

An invitation is given to open your heart's door to Jesus.

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print